WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method for use in wireless equipment, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a signal;

processing the received signal to generate a Yamamoto-Itoh (*YI*) metric; and

providing a Bit-Error-Rate (*BER*) estimate for the received signal as a function of the YI metric.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the providing step further comprises the steps of:

retrieving, from at least one look-up table stored in a memory, values for a compensation factor as a function of a value of the generated YI metric and an initial *BER* estimate as a function of the generated *YI* metric; and

modifying the initial *BER* estimate value with the retrieved compensation factor value to provide the *BER* estimate.

3. A method for use in wireless equipment, the method comprising the steps of:

processing a received signal to provide at least one Yamamoto-Itoh (*YI*) metric value over a time period;

selecting a compensation factor value as a function of the provided *YI* metric value;

selecting an initial *BER* estimate value as a function of the provided *YI* metric value; and

providing a Bit-Error-Rate (*BER*) estimate for the received signal as a function of the initial *BER* estimate value and the selected compensation factor value.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the providing step further includes the step of multiplying the selected compensation factor value with the initial *BER* estimate value to provide the *BER* estimate.

5. A method for use in wireless equipment, the method comprising the steps of:

processing a received signal to provide an initial *BER* estimate value for the

received signal;

modifying the initial *BER* estimate value for the received signal with a compensation factor value to provide a Bit-Error-Rate (*BER*) estimate for the received signal, wherein the compensation factor value is determined as a function of at least one Yamamoto Itoh (*YI*) metric value.

6. Apparatus for use in wireless equipment, the apparatus comprising:

a convolutional decoder for processing a received signal for use in determining at least one Yamamoto-Itoh (*YI*) metric value; and

a processor for providing a Bit-Error-Rate (*BER*) estimate for the received signal as a function of the at least one *YI* metric value.

7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the processor (a) retrieves, from at least one look-up table stored in a memory, a compensation factor value as a function of the at least one *YI* metric value, and an initial *BER* estimate value as a function of the at least one *YI* metric value, and (b) modifies the initial *BER* estimate value with the retrieved compensation factor value to provide the *BER* estimate.

8. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the processor (a) determines a compensation factor value as a function of the at least one *YI* metric value, (b) determines an initial *BER* estimate value as a function of the at least one *YI* metric value, and (c) provides the *BER* estimate for the received signal as a function of the initial *BER* estimate value and the selected compensation factor value.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the processor multiplies the selected compensation factor value with the initial *BER* estimate value to provide the *BER* estimate.

10. A wireless receiver comprising:

a processor; and

a memory for storing a look-up table;

wherein the processor uses a Yamamoto-Itoh (*YI*) metric value as in index into the look-up table to retrieve an associated Bit-Error-Rate (*BER*) for a received signal.

11. A wireless receiver comprising:

a memory for storing a look-up table such that an index into the look-up table is a Yamamoto-Itoh (*YI*) metric value for retrieving an initial Bit-Error-Rate (*BER*) estimate value stored therein; and

a processor for modifying the initial *BER* value with a scale factor to provide a Bit-Error-Rate (*BER*) estimate for a received signal.